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Turkey Day

FOOD SAFETY





Turkey Day Food Safety

“Turkey dinner make it easy, make it tasty and keep it safe.”

Turkey is a low cost, low fat food that most people enjoy during the fall and holiday season. A 3-ounce serving without skin has 129 calories, 6% from fat. At 90 cents a pound, the cost per serving is low. Allow 3/4 to 1 pound per serving from an 8-12 pound turkey. Larger birds (over 12 pounds) have more meat, so allow 1/2 to 3/4 pound per serving.

Thawing Frozen Turkey

DO NOT thaw poultry or meat at room temperature. Bacteria multiply quickly on the warm surface. Leave turkey in the original package and use one of the following methods:

**No Hurry:* Place the turkey on a tray in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days; allow 24 hours for every 5 pounds of turkey (20 pound turkey needs 4 days to thaw).

**Fast:* Place the turkey in a deep pot or clean sink. Cover with cold water. Change the water every half-hour. Allow one hour to thaw two pounds (10 hours for a 20 pound turkey). Refrigerate when thawed or roast immediately.

**Faster:* Microwave thawing is possible but the turkey needs to be cooked immediately after thawing. Follow the directions provided by the microwave manufacturer.

Cook the thawed turkey within two days. Re-freezing thawed turkey is not recommended because the quality is lowered.

Turkey Ready for the Roaster

Remove original wrapping from the thawed turkey. Remove giblets and neck from the body and neck cavities. Tie down or tuck in legs and wing tips to prevent overcooking. Place the turkey on a roasting rack in a large roaster or use a large cake pan with aluminum foil to cover the turkey. A roasting rack makes it easier to lift the turkey out of the pan.

After handling the raw turkey it is very important that you use warm soapy water to wash your hands and all the equipment that was used. Clean all work surfaces (countertops and sink) with soap and water. Then lightly spray the surfaces with a sanitizing solution of one quart water with one teaspoon chlorine bleach. This sanitizing step will kill more of the bacteria that may remain after the surfaces are cleaned.

Do not wash poultry because bacteria scattered in the kitchen may contaminate other food items. Proper cooking kills most bacteria found on raw poultry.



To Stuff or Not To Stuff

For uniform doneness and optimal safety do not stuff the turkey. If you do stuff the turkey follow these food safety pointers.

- Mix stuffing just before it goes into the turkey. Immediately place the stuffed turkey into the hot oven.
- Stuff the turkey loosely – about 3/4 cup of stuffing per pound of turkey.
- Use a thermometer to check the temperature of the stuffing. The center of the stuffing inside the turkey should reach 165°F before removing the turkey from the oven.

Turkey Roasting

Preheat oven to 325 ° F. Place the turkey, breast-side up, on a rack in a roasting pan. If you cover the turkey check it about half-way through the estimated roasting time. Baste it with broth or fruit juices. Remove the cover about one hour before the roasting is done to brown the turkey.

Use an instant read thermometer to test the temperature of the turkey. Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the thigh, do not touch the bone. The turkey thigh is done when the thermometer registers 180 to 185° F. Also, juices should be clear, not pink when the thigh muscle is pierced with a fork. If you do not have a thermometer, test the drumstick by pressing it with your fingers, it should feel soft. Turn the drumstick. The joint should move easily. The juices should be clear, not pink.

Do not roast at oven temperatures lower than 325 ° F. Do not interrupt the cooking process. Bacteria multiply rapidly at lower temperatures.

Approximate Cooking Times in 325°F oven.

	Turkey without stuffing	Turkey with stuffing
4 to 6 lb. breast	1 1/2 to 2 1/4 hours	
6 to 8 lb. breast	2 1/4 to 3 1/4 hours	
8 to 12 lb. whole	2 3/4 to 3 hours	3 to 3 1/2 hours
12 to 14 lbs	3 to 3 3/4 hours	3 1/2 to 4 hours
14 to 18 lbs	3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours	4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 lbs	4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours	4 1/4 to 4 3/4 hours
20 to 24 lbs	4 1/2 to 5 hours	4 3/4 to 5 1/4 hours

Cooking Frozen Turkey

A frozen turkey can be roasted without thawing. A 12 to 13 lb. turkey roasted in a 325°F oven for 5 to 5 1/2 hours is ready to eat. After 3 1/2 hours the turkey should be thawed enough so you can pull out the bag of heart, liver, etc. and remove the neck. Use a thermometer to check the temperature of the roasted turkey. The turkey is done when the thigh reaches a temperature of 180° F and the breast 170° F.

Before Carving

The roasted turkey needs to “rest” for 20 to 30 minutes before you begin carving. Resting allows for the redistribution and re-absorption of the juices in the meat. The meat becomes firm and is easier to slice. This is the time to make gravy and finish other meal preparations.

Turkey Gravy

2 Tablespoons margarine, butter, or turkey drippings
3 Tablespoons flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups turkey broth or canned chicken broth

1. In skillet, melt margarine over low heat.
2. Mix in flour and salt. Stir and heat until bubbly.
3. Add broth slowly, stirring constantly.
4. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, for 5-10 minutes.

Makes: 6 servings, about 62 calories per 1/4 Cup serving.
Reheat leftover gravy to 165°F before serving.

Giblet Gravy

Add 1/2 cup cooked chopped giblets (heart, liver, and gizzard) to turkey gravy. Heat a few minutes to blend flavors.

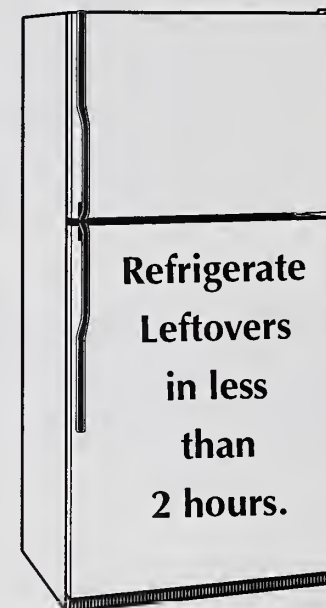
Slow Cooker Bread Dressing

4 Tablespoons vegetable oil
2 cups onion, chopped
2 cups celery, diced
16 cups dried bread cubes (whole wheat preferred)
1 teaspoon thyme
1 teaspoon marjoram (could substitute sage)
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
3 1/2 cups chicken broth

1. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in medium fry pan.
2. Add onion and celery, cook until translucent.
3. Use remaining 2 tablespoons oil to coat the bottom and sides of slow cooker (crock pot).
4. Put bread cubes into cooker.
5. Add remaining ingredients, stir.
6. Heat slow cooker on high for one hour, then set temperature on low and cook for 5 hours.

Makes: 16 servings, about 151 calories per 1 cup serving, percent of calories from fat 32%.

This is a low fat version of bread dressing or stuffing. The pan juices from turkey or chicken could replace a cup of the broth but it would increase the fat content and the calories.



Old Fashioned Dressing

- 4 Tablespoons margarine or butter
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 8 cups dried bread cubes
- 2 Tablespoons chopped dried parsley
- 1 (4 oz) can sliced mushrooms (optional)
- 1 teaspoonful ground sage (optional)
- 3/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning (optional)
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 3 cups chicken or turkey broth

1. Melt margarine in a medium fry pan.
2. Add onions and celery; cook until tender, about 10 minutes.
3. In large bowl combine onion mixture and remaining dry ingredients. Toss lightly.
4. Add broth and mix.

Makes: 10 one cup servings, about 165 calories each. Calories from fat 26%

Oven Bake the Dressing:

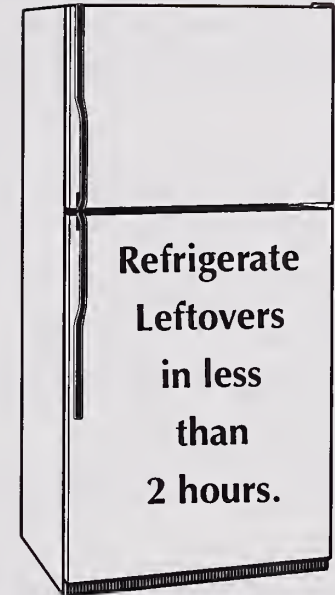
1. Place in a well-greased 2-1/2 quart baking dish.
2. Bake at 350° F. for 35-40 minutes. For a moist dressing, cover the dish.
3. Baste the dressing with additional broth, if desired.

Stove Top Dressing:

1. Toast bread cubes. Set aside for later use.
2. Melt margarine in medium size fry pan.
3. Add celery and onion; cook until tender, about 10 minutes.
4. Add parsley, mushrooms, seasonings, and broth. Cook 5 minutes.
5. Remove from heat; stir in toasted bread cubes. Cover and let stand 10 minutes.
6. Serve immediately.

Food Safety Alert

Immediately after serving turkey, remove any remaining stuffing from the turkey. Within 2 hours the turkey and the stuffing need to be in the refrigerator in separate containers. Bacteria grow quickly in warm moist foods left at room temperature.



Make-Ahead Mashed Potatoes

Make these potatoes a day or two before you plan to serve them. Store in the refrigerator and reheat in the oven just before serving. Makes: 12 servings (one cup each).

5 pounds potatoes, peeled and cubed
8 ounces light or non-fat cream cheese
8 ounces light or non-fat sour cream
1/2 cup low-fat milk
2 teaspoons onion powder
1 teaspoon salt
Ground black pepper to taste

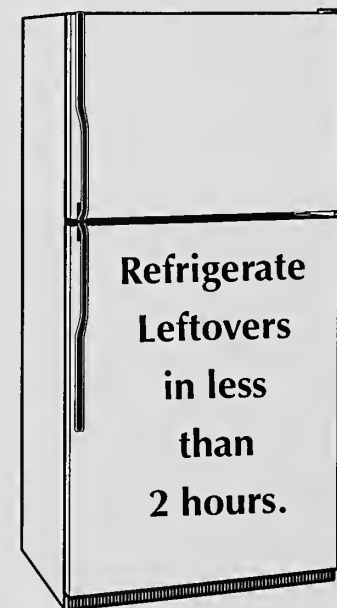
1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Drop in potatoes, and cook until tender but still firm, about 15 minutes.
2. Transfer potatoes to a large mixing bowl and mash with a mixer until smooth.
3. Add cream cheese, sour cream, milk, onion powder, salt and pepper. Mix well.
4. Lightly grease a large baking dish or pan (9x13 cake pan).
5. Spread potato mixture into the baking dish, cover and refrigerate 8 hours or longer.
6. Preheat oven to 325°F. Bake the covered potatoes for 50 minutes or until the center of the potatoes reaches 165°F on an instant read thermometer.

Marinated Vegetable Salad

3 cups broccoli florets
3 cups cauliflower florets
1 cup carrots coarsely chopped
2 cucumbers peeled, seeded and chopped
2 bell peppers cut into 1 inch pieces
1/2 cup Italian-style salad dressing

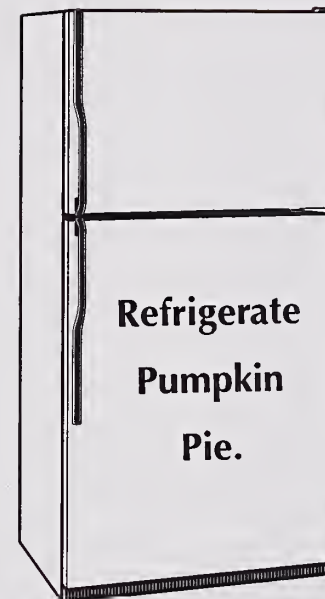
1. Combine all ingredients in a medium size mixing bowl.
2. Cover and refrigerate for one hour before serving.

Makes: 8 one cup servings. Refrigerate leftovers in less than 2 hours.



No-Crust Pumpkin Pie

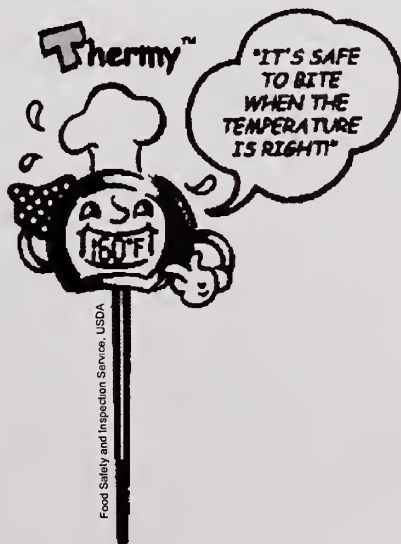
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
2/3 cup white sugar
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
2 eggs, beaten
1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin
1 can (12 ounce) non-fat evaporated milk
2-3 teaspoons vanilla



1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 or 10 inch pie plate and set aside.
2. Sift together the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, ginger and cloves.
3. In a large bowl, beat together the sugar, oil and eggs. Mix in the pumpkin, milk and vanilla. Add the sifted ingredients, and beat until smooth. Pour into the prepared pan.
4. Bake at 350°F for 50 to 55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Makes: 8 servings, 209 calories per serving, percent calories from fat 22%.

Pumpkin Pie with crust has 255 calories per serving, percent of calories from fat 35%.



USE A FOOD THERMOMETER

It's the only way to tell if your food has reached a high enough temperature to destroy harmful bacteria.

For more information, call the
USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

1-800-535-4555

TTY: 1-800-256-7072

www.fsis.usda.gov/thermy

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